



Economic Impact of Arlington's Theatres

Prepared for
Planning Department of Arlington



Cambridge Economic Research

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Executive Summary

Both the Capitol Theatre and the Regent Theatre have been continually operating in Arlington for nearly a century. For decades, the theatres have anchored vibrant business districts, supporting many long-established shops and restaurants. At present, they draw some 200,000 people a year to East Arlington and Arlington Center from throughout New England. Over 60% of theatre patrons -- some 120,000 people -- are from out of town. This effectively expands the trade area for businesses in East Arlington and Arlington Center, over 40% of whose customers come from out of town to shop and eat.

On average, businesses in the East Arlington and Arlington Center business districts attribute 10% to 15% of their sales to spending generated by theatre audiences. Three-quarters of businesses experience higher sales when there is a popular performance or movie at the theatres. Ninety percent of businesses interviewed report that the theatres had a positive impact on their trade. Over 90% of businesses that are open after 6:00 p.m. get more business on event days than those that close early.

Our Audience Survey showed that theatre patrons spend an average of \$33 per party in addition to the cost of admission -- about \$12 per person. Frequent theatre patrons -- those who had visited the theatre more than 5 times -- spent more than others, at \$46 per party. Those from outside of the Boston metropolitan area spent the most, at \$96 per party -- more than twice as much as the others. The combined annual economic impact of the spending of theatre patrons is estimated at \$2.4 million a year.

Employment in arts & entertainment and restaurants in Arlington has grown significantly through the recent recession while jobs in other sectors have contracted. These industries are labor-intensive and provide entry-level jobs for young people in the community. Investing in local theatres is sound public policy. As one Capitol Theatre patron commented: *"This community theatre is a gem. Worth investing in."*

Just as important as the economic impact are the social and cultural impacts of the theatres. The theatres distinguish Arlington from surrounding communities, bringing in audiences from all over New

"Great Town!"

Regent Theatre Audience Survey,
First-time visitors from
Providence, RI, Party of 8, Spent
\$500

England who are left with a very favorable impression of the Town's identity and sense of community. Our audience survey found that patrons have strong emotional attachments to both theatres not only because of the link that they provide with the past but also due to their contribution to the present-day local arts and entertainment scene. Both local and non-local audience members consider survival of the theatres to be critical to Arlington's future.

1 Introduction

“The Regent is a great attraction that brings people to Arlington from all over the region. Charming town. We will return.”

First-time visitors from Hingham,
Spent \$120 in town.

Most of us appreciate the intrinsic benefits of the arts—their beauty and vision; how they inspire, soothe, provoke, and connect us. When it comes time to make tough funding choices, however, elected officials and business leaders need to have strong and credible data that demonstrates the economic benefits of a vibrant nonprofit arts and culture industry.

The purpose of this study is to help the Town of Arlington develop an understanding of the contribution of the Capitol and the Regent Theatres to the Town’s economy and to its quality of life. Toward this end, Cambridge Economic Research has conducted a review of the literature regarding the findings of similar economic impact analyses conducted elsewhere in the country. We have gathered primary data on impacts on sales and operations by conducting a survey of restaurants and shops in East Arlington and in Arlington Center.

“The Capitol Theatre is integral to Arlington and is the backbone of the East Arlington Business District.”

Arlington Party of 3, spent
\$100 in town.

2 Review of the Literature

The arts and entertainment industry is an important economic driver that has catalyzed commercial district revitalization throughout the country. A 2012 study commissioned by Americans for the Arts surveyed over 6000 arts and cultural organizations and 95,000 audience members across the country. This study concluded that, nationally, the arts and entertainment industry generates \$166.2 billion in economic activity every year resulting in \$29.6 billion in federal, state, and local tax revenues. Arts and culture organizations are composed of arts-based businesses that range from nonprofit museums, symphonies, and theaters to private film, architecture, animation, video games, and advertising companies. Industries like computer programming and scientific research—both creative, but not arts-based – have been excluded.

Arts and entertainment businesses are very labor intensive, supporting 5.7 million full time jobs in the US that can't be exported. They are among the fastest growing industries in the country and currently account for over 1% of the US workforce. During the first five years of the millennium, spending by arts and related organizations and their audiences grew by nearly one-quarter. Theaters support vibrant commercial districts and neighborhoods, revitalize communities, and bring tourists and new residents to an area.

The Americans for the Arts study found that theatre audiences spend an average of \$24.60 each in addition to ticket prices. Non-local attendees were found to spend more than twice as much as local attendees. A study of the economic impacts of Mass MOCA (the Museum of Contemporary Art in North Adams) found that Massachusetts's arts and culture audiences spend an average of \$38.00 in addition to admission prices. Most of this is spent on meals and refreshments, but it also includes spending on gifts, clothes, childcare and transportation.

A study of the economic impact of theaters in Arlington County, Virginia found that more than 50% of theater patrons visit a restaurant prior to attending the show. On performance nights, area restaurants experience increased sales over non-performance nights of between 10% and 20%. Each performance generates an average of \$8,000 in restaurant sales. Approximately \$4 million annually is generated in Arlington County's restaurants and shops, showing that support for the arts is an investment in the area's economic well-being. The study concluded that support for the County's theaters does not come at the expense of economic development; theatre has proven to be an economic engine that has driven growth in the local economy.

The British Film Institute and the UK Film Council commissioned a study to measure and assess the qualitative impacts of local theatres on the social and cultural life in their communities. Toward that end, a series of case studies of local theatres throughout the UK were undertaken. The study found that

local theatres play a crucial part in fostering a “sense of place” for their communities as key venues with a community focus. They provide a strong social function as meeting places where people can socialize.

The theatres play an important social inclusion role, particularly for elderly people who have the opportunity to enjoy entertainment targeted at their demographic in a traditional town center environment and for other commonly excluded groups such as young parents with babies. Concerts, plays, film festivals, special screenings and educational initiatives often reach underserved ethnic and minority populations. Theatres enhance local learning opportunities through links with schools, screenings, and courses. Local theatres are seen in general as affordable leisure options for families, with fewer concerns over travel and food costs than other activities. British theatres are seen as safe, secure venues that foster independence among young people.

The British study found that local theatres make a positive contribution to town center vitality. Most theatres retain a traditional façade, creating an iconic branding for their commercial districts. As is illustrated by our business and audience surveys, their presence has a positive ripple effect on other traders in the vicinity. Association with the theatre, with its prominent local image, creates important marketing opportunities for other businesses. The theatres encourage foot traffic that makes the neighborhood feel safer, particularly in the evening.

“I’ve been coming to the Capitol Theatre for 50 years, all through my childhood. I will continue. I love this theatre.”

Stoneham, party of 2, spent \$35.

3 Economic Data Analysis

Table E-1 looks at employment change in the Town of Arlington between 2001 and 2012. It shows that, during this recessionary period, Arlington gained about 75 businesses but lost 5% of its jobs. The largest losses in percentage terms were in manufacturing sectors, in which -60% of jobs were lost – over 160 jobs. Growth was reported in wholesale trade, health care, finance, insurance, and real estate.

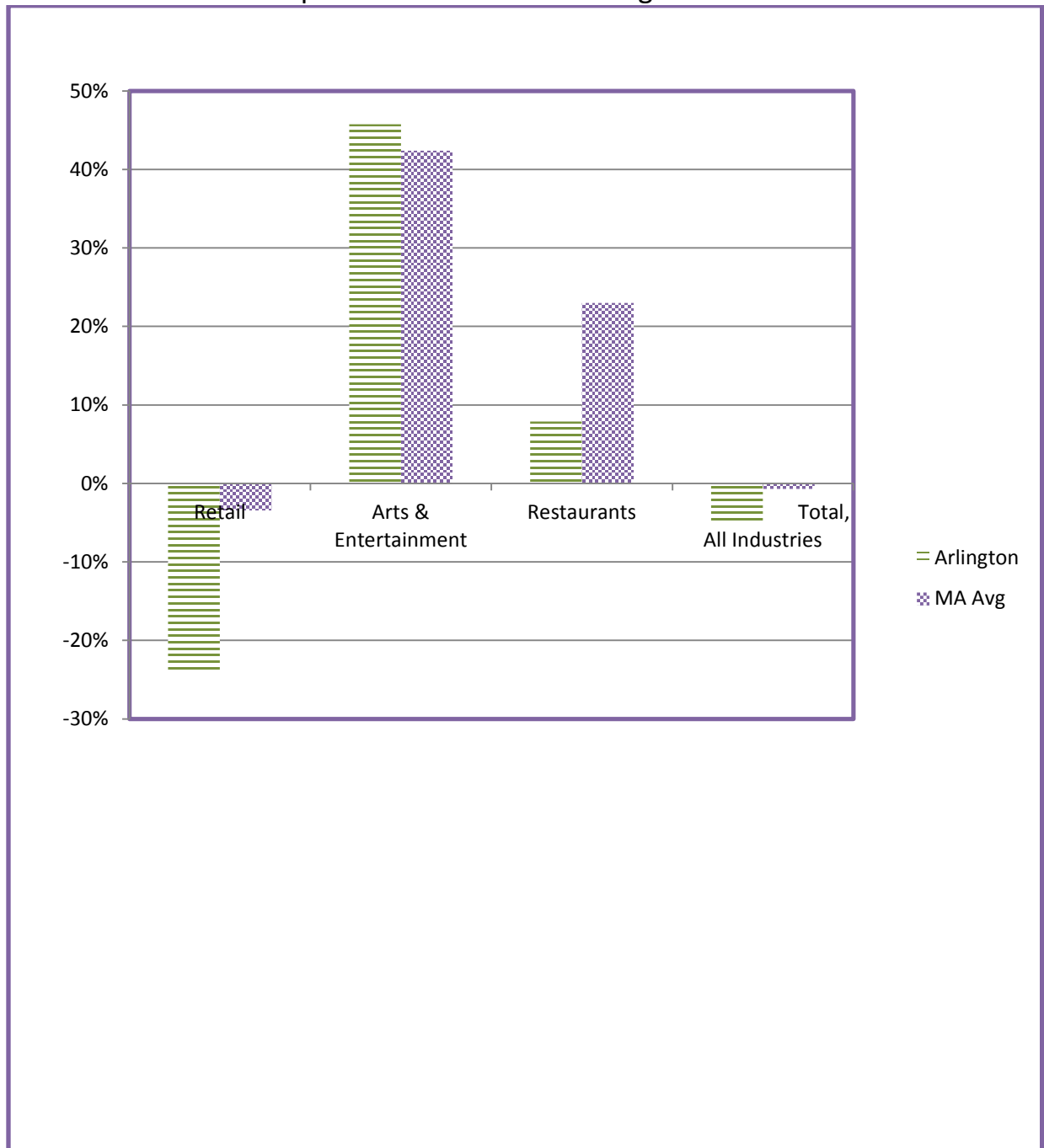
Table E-1
Employment Change in Arlington 2001-2012

	<u>2001</u>		<u>2012</u>		% Change	
	<u>Businesses</u>	<u>Jobs</u>	<u>Businesses</u>	<u>Jobs</u>	<u>Businesses</u>	<u>Jobs</u>
23 - Construction	98	975	96	970	-2%	-1%
31-33 - Manufacturing	18	274	9	109	-50%	-60%
42 - Wholesale Trade	27	89	26	135	-4%	52%
44-45 - Retail Trade	101	1,202	91	914	-10%	-24%
46-47 Transportation & Warehousing	NA	NA	10	151	NA	NA
51 - Information	40	283	25	281	-38%	-1%
52 - Finance and Insurance	41	328	41	376	0%	15%
53 - Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	35	186	32	152	-9%	-18%
54 - Professional and Technical Services	170	671	178	355	5%	-47%
56 - Administrative and Waste Services	44	359	46	347	5%	-3%
61 - Educational Services	20	1,092	24	826	20%	-24%
62 - Health Care and Social Assistance	106	1,234	128	1,561	21%	26%
71 - Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	13	118	21	172	62%	46%
72 - Accommodation and Food Services	72	660	73	712	1%	8%
81 - Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	154	539	224	687	45%	27%
92 - Public Administration	<u>5</u>	<u>475</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>446</u>	<u>0%</u>	<u>-6%</u>
Total Jobs - All Industries	956	8,735	1,032	8,320	8%	-5%

Source: Mass LWD, ES-202 data

Chart E-2 highlights employment change in businesses that are most-impacted by Arlington's theaters. Arlington's retail sector fared poorly during the recessionary years, losing 288 jobs, nearly one-quarter of the total. Statewide retail losses were less severe at -3%. By contrast, jobs in Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation businesses grew by over 45% and the number of businesses increased by nearly two-thirds, outstripping state averages. Arlington's restaurants performed well over the period. Despite the recession, restaurant jobs grew by 8%, compared to state average growth of nearly 25%. Given the low vacancy rate of storefront units in Arlington, this suggests that restaurants now occupy units formerly occupied by shops.

Chart E-2
Employment Change in Retail, Entertainment, and Restaurants in Arlington
Compared to Mass State Average 2001-2012



Source: Mass LWD, ES-202 data

4 Arlington's Theatres

4.1 Capitol Theatre

The Capitol Theatre was built in 1925. Originally seating almost 1600 patrons, the Capitol had a full stage with dressing rooms to accommodate the occasional vaudeville or novelty act that would be



presented with the movies on screen. The theater changed owners several times between the early 1930s and 1990. During the 1960s the Capitol was remodeled to a more contemporary design but the original details including granite columns and gold leaf detail were simply covered over rather than demolished. The theatre was multiplexed in 1989. As a result of renovations undertaken in the 1990's by the theatre's current owners, the theatre's original Art Deco detailing has been lovingly restored.

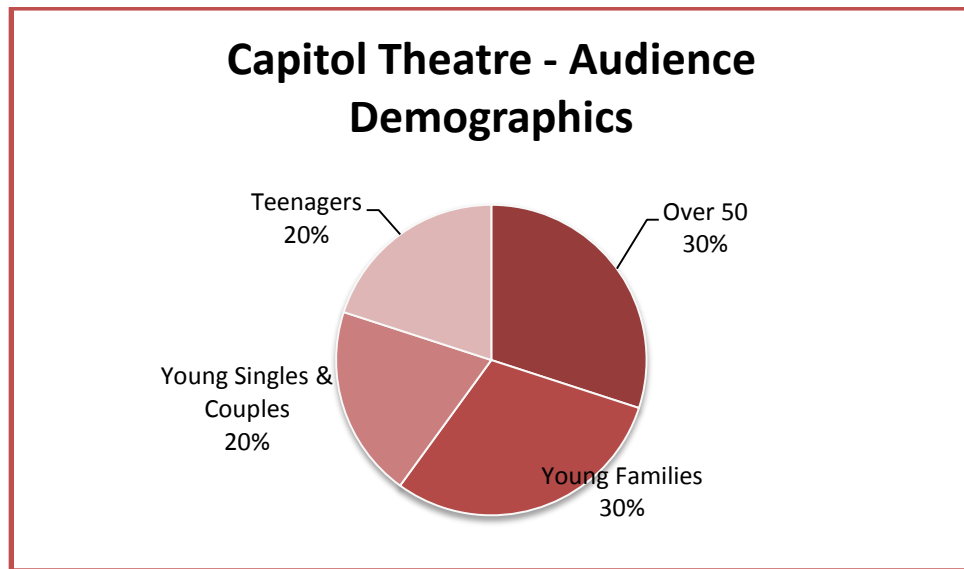
In the process of multiplex conversion, great care was taken to preserve the original aesthetic of the theater and each screening room retains the distinct character of the original space. Theater #1 encompasses the original orchestra seating area and stage with 50 ft. high ceilings with gold leaf details. Other screening rooms now occupy the former balcony and backstage area. A sixth screen was added on the site of the old stage in 1990. The Theatre's owners have continued to maintain and upgrade the complex. In 2010 renovations included new seating in auditoriums, a fresh coat of paint in the lobbies and cinemas, and the addition of REAL-D 3D movies.

Today, the six –screen Capitol continues its tradition of affording locals a steady mix of first-run movies, with an emphasis on family-friendly films and independent productions. Last year's attendance topped 130,000. Over 95% of the Capitol's market is mainstream films. As is shown in Chart T-1, 30% of its audiences are people over 50. Another 30% are young families. An estimated 20% are young singles and couples, with the remaining 20% being teenagers. The Capitol is a popular venue for children's birthday parties and has a dedicated screening room for these events.

"I've been coming here for 50 years, all through my childhood. I will continue. I love this theatre."

Stoneham, party of 2, spent \$35.

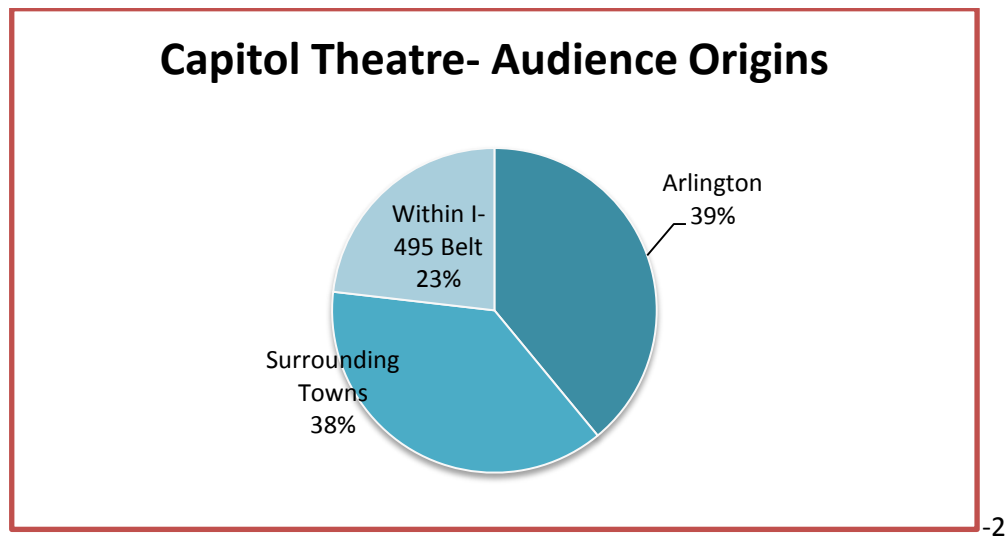
Chart T-1



Source: Interview with FEI Theatres

Chart T-2 shows the catchment area of the Capitol Theatre. Almost 40% of audience is from Arlington. A nearly equal share is from the surrounding towns of Winchester, Cambridge Somerville, Watertown, Lexington, Belmont, and Medford. Nearly one-quarter are from other towns within the I-495 belt.

Chart T-2



Source: Cambridge Economic Research, Audience Survey

4.2 Regent Theatre

Built in 1916, the historic Regent Theatre remains true to its roots as a vibrant vaudeville house. An intimate 500-seat performing arts center with superior acoustics and comfortable seating, the Regent features live music concerts, theatre, dance events, family entertainment, comedy, film specials, and more. The theatre has been continuously operating for 97 years. Originally, there was a bowling alley in the basement with billiards and poolrooms. In 1926, the Theatre was renovated to current tastes and again in 1940, when the lobby was pine-paneled.



The facility is a venue for live entertainment and film series. Due to the finely niched nature of shows, the Regent serves groups that are under-served by mainstream entertainment. The Regent produces about 30% of events. Sponsors who rent the theatre produce about half of events. The balance of events are produced and promoted in partnership between the Regent and the third-party event sponsor. The Regent hosts 4 to 5 events a week. Programming averages about 15 hours a week, for a total of about 800 hours of quality entertainment a

year geared to a diverse range of economic, social, age, and ethnic niche groups.

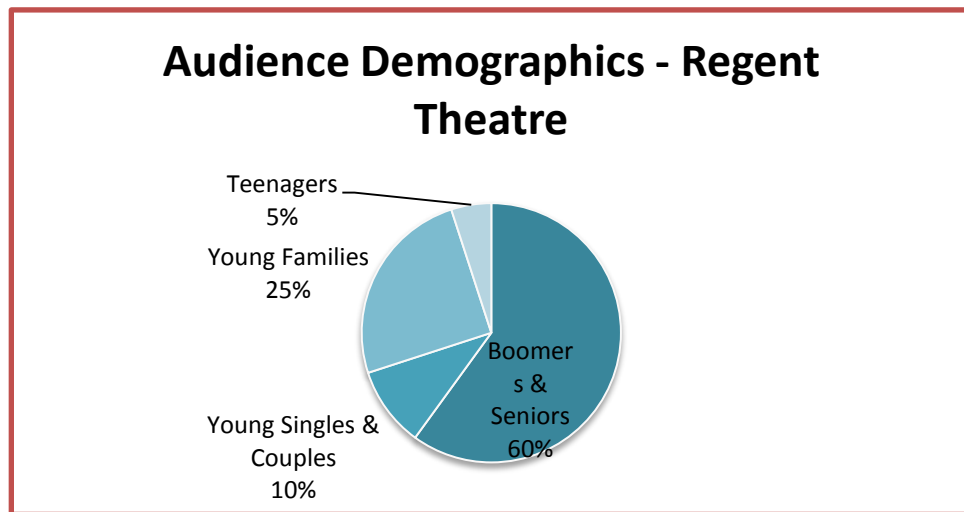
The Regent has a number of exclusive events throughout the year with nationally and internationally known performers—many of whom are bona fide legends. Covering a wide spectrum of genres, the following groups and solo artists have played here during the past five years: Mickey Rooney, Paula Poundstone, Johnny Winter, Taj Mahal, Hot Tuna, Count Basie Orchestra, Beatlejuice, Steven Tyler, Vanilla Fudge, Edgar Winter, Mike Smith of the Dave Clark Five, Dresden Dolls, The Von Trapp Children, The Russian American Kids Circus, Boys of the Lough, and Odetta.

"The Regent Theatre is a vibrant part of Arlington's nightlife. We are fortunate to have a venue that offers such a variety of entertainment."

Arlington Party of 3, spent \$45 in town.

Chart T-3 shows that 60% of the Regent's audience are over 50 years old. Young families make up about a quarter of the audience, while singles under 40 and teenagers comprise much smaller shares.

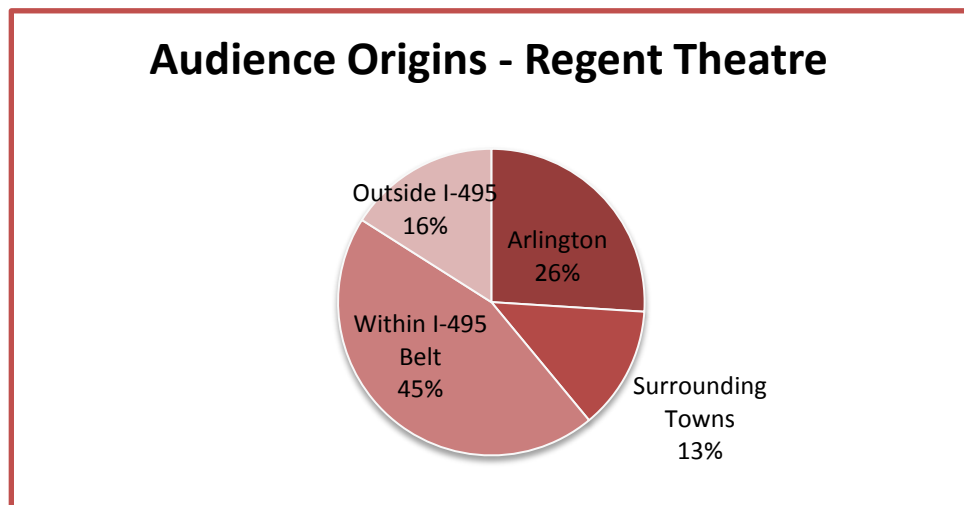
Chart T-3



Source: Interview with Regent Theatre Owners

Chart T-4 shows that the Regent draws its audience from a much wider catchment area than the Capitol. About a quarter of the audience comes from Arlington, while just 15% come from surrounding towns. Another 45% comes from other towns within the Boston metro area, while over 15% come from places outside of the Boston metro area, including Worcester County, Bristol County, New Hampshire and Rhode Island.

Chart T-4



Source: Cambridge Economic Research, Audience Survey

5 Businesses Survey Findings

In order to gauge the importance of Arlington's two theatres to the business communities surrounding them, Cambridge Economic Research conducted a survey of 25 businesses in East Arlington and Arlington Center. The purpose of this survey was to measure the extent of the theatres' impact on trade and under what conditions this impact is most pronounced.

Of the 25 businesses that were interviewed, 12 are located in East Arlington, while 13 are in Arlington Center. Among them, the 25 businesses provide a total of 285 jobs. 85 of these (30%) are full-time jobs. The survey found that most businesses surrounding the theatres have been long established in the commercial centers, with the average business having been in the same location for over 10 years. Over two-thirds of businesses reported that the theatres had been a factor in their decisions to locate in Arlington.

Businesses reported that, on average, 40% of their customers come from outside of Arlington. Most of them come from surrounding towns. Many businesses thought that, without the theatres, East Arlington and Arlington Center would serve only the surrounding neighborhood. The theatres bring in patrons, not only from surrounding towns but also from throughout the metro area and (in the case of the Regent Theatre) from throughout New England who spend money at local shops and restaurants before and after events and return to Arlington to shop and eat.

"This is a lovely town. We ate in a very nice restaurant only because we came here for a show."

Party of 3 from Marblehead, spent \$90 at local businesses.

Nearly 90% of businesses say that the theatres have a positive economic impact on their businesses and on the wider commercial districts that they anchor. Three-quarters said that they experienced a noticeable increase in sales at times when there were events at the Regent Theatre or on weekends when there is a popular movie at the Capitol Theatre.

Businesses' estimates of the impact of the theatres on their businesses ranged widely – from 0% to 50%. They average between 10% and 15%. Their average sale is \$42.50, underscoring the upscale profile of most businesses surrounding the theatres.

"The theatre is the lure for us to spend money at local businesses."

East Boston Resident, spent \$20 at local businesses.

Table B-1 breaks down the survey results for the East Arlington and Arlington Center commercial districts. The businesses in Arlington Center have been longer established (14 years) than those in East Arlington (9 years). The theatre was somewhat more important in the location decisions of businesses locating

in Arlington Center; with 70% of businesses reporting that the theatre was a factor in their decisions to locate in the Center, compared to 64% in East Arlington. Three-quarters of businesses in East Arlington said that they experience a positive impact from the Capitol Theatre, while 100% of the businesses interviewed in Arlington Center reported positive impacts from the Regent Theatre. Businesses interviewed in East Arlington report that their average sale is \$54.30, well above the \$32.00 average reported for Arlington Center.

Table B-1

Survey Averages for East Arlington & Arlington Center

Location	Years Here	% Saying theater was a factor in location choice	Importance of Theatres to Business (3=Very important)	% Reporting Positive Impact from Theatres	Avg. Sale
East Arlington	9	64%	2.3	75%	\$ 54.30
Arlington Center	14	70%	2.1	100%	\$ 32.00
Survey Average	11	67%	2.2	88%	\$ 42.53

Source: Cambridge Economic Research Survey of Arlington Businesses, June 2013.

Table B-2 compares survey results for restaurants with those for retailers in the two commercial districts. On average, the restaurants employ an average of 18 full and part-time workers, over four times the average for shops. Restaurants provide 85% of the jobs in the businesses surveyed, while they comprise 60% of the businesses sampled. Most shops and restaurants have been established in Arlington for many years. The average length of time that these businesses have been at their current locations is 11 years. 90% of retailers and 87% of restaurants report that they experience an increase in business on event days. The average sale for retailers is \$60, while that for restaurants is \$35. The restaurants sampled included upscale restaurants, local cafes, takeaways, bakeries, and coffee shops.

Table B-2

Business Survey Responses for Restaurants & Retail Establishments

Business	Employment	Years Here	Non-Local Customers	% Experiencing Spinoff Business from Theatres	Avg. Sale
Retail Avg.	4	10	50%	90%	\$60.00
Restaurant Avg.	18	11	30%	87%	\$35.00
Survey Average	13	11	41%	88%	\$42.50

Source: Cambridge Economic Research Survey of Arlington Businesses, June 2013.

Table B-3 contrasts survey results for businesses with early and late closing hours. Clearly, businesses that are open after 6 pm benefit significantly more than those that close earlier. 100% of businesses with later closing times report that they get spinoff business from the theatres, while for those with earlier closing times, 63% of businesses reported spinoff from theatres. Some of the businesses with earlier closing times reported that theatre patrons often returned to the town to patronize their businesses during open hours, which they had noticed during visits to the theatres.

Over 90% of businesses with late closing times experience higher sales on event days. Businesses closing before 6 pm estimated the proportion of their trade attributable to the theatre's drawing power accounted for 7% of their business, compared with 15% for those with later closing times. Businesses that close later are clearly more upscale than those with earlier hours; the average sale for the late-closing establishments was \$50, compared with \$18.50 for those with early closing times.

Table B-3

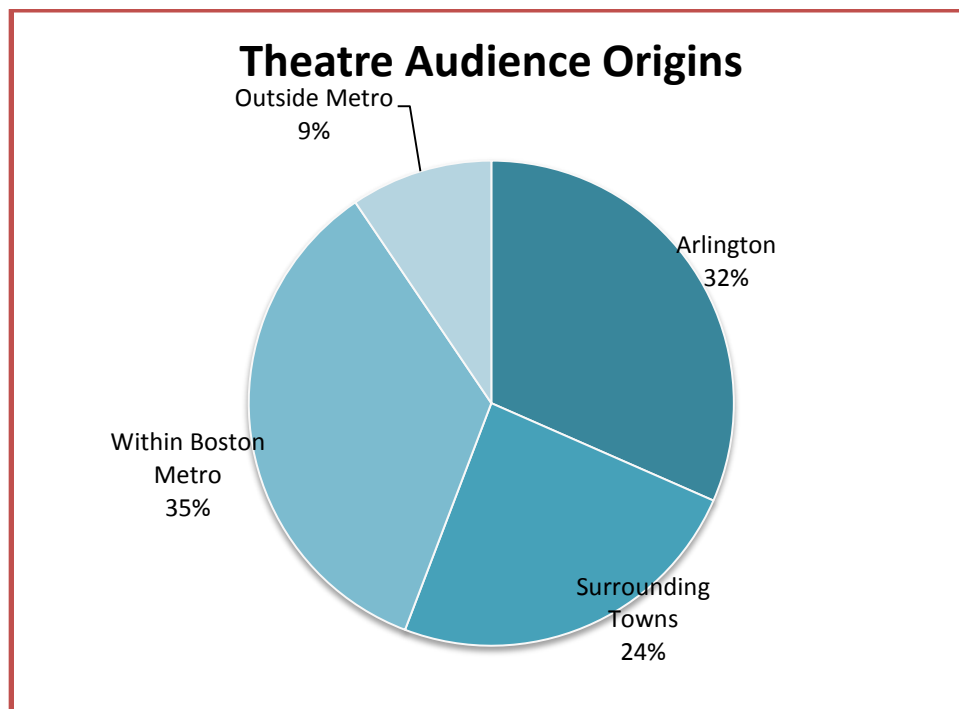
Theatre Impact on Business Performance by Hours of Operation

Closing Time	% Reporting Spinoff from Theatres	Importance of Theatres to Business (3=Very important)	% Reporting higher sales on Event Days	% of Trade due to Theatres	Avg. Sale
Close Before 6:00 pm	63%	1.9	50%	7%	\$18.50
Close After 6:00 pm	100%	2.4	93%	15%	\$50.00
Survey Average	88%	2.2	75%	12%	\$42.50

6 Audience Survey Findings

In order to quantify specific economic impacts of audience spending at the Capitol and Regent Theatres, a handout survey of 190 theatre patrons was conducted. The survey found that the average theatre party size is 3 people. Respondents had visited the theatre an average of 4 times before.

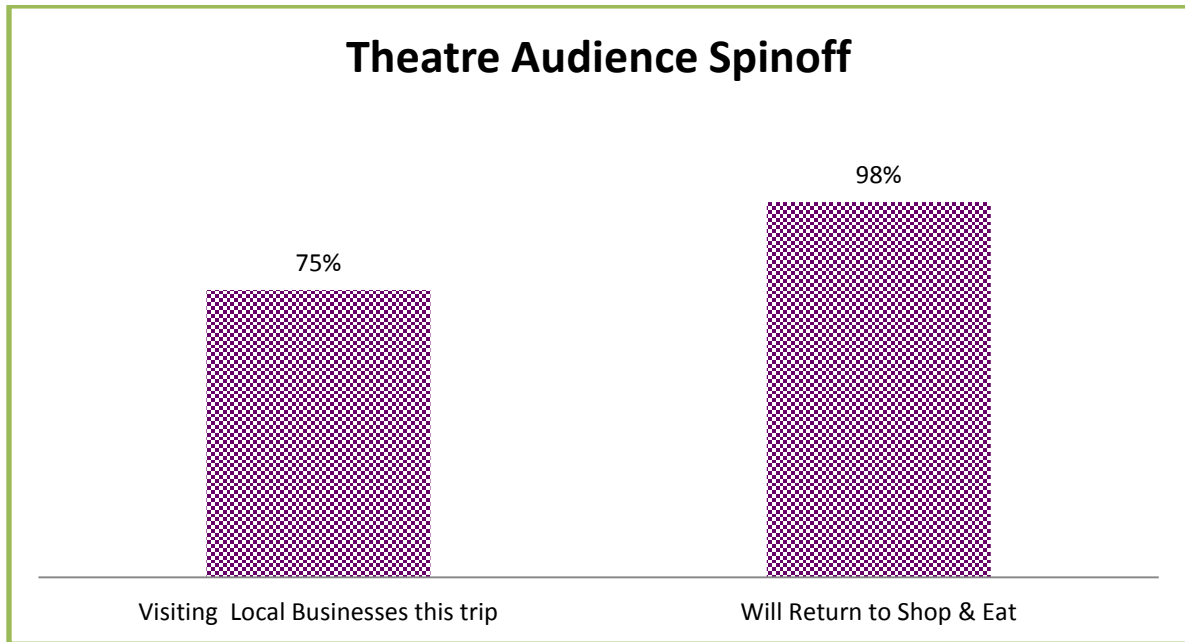
Chart A-1



Source: Cambridge Economic Research, Audience Survey

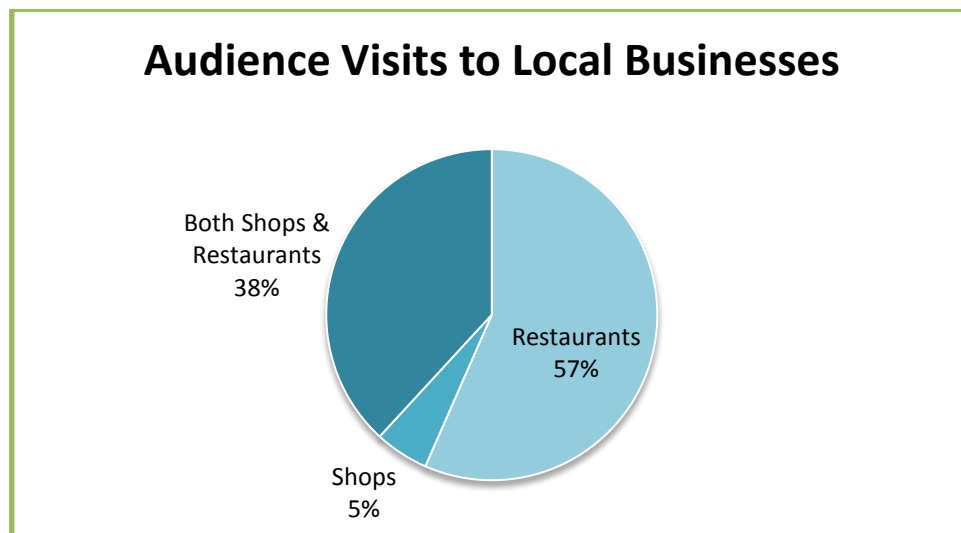
Chart A-1 shows that just one-third of the audience surveyed were from Arlington. About one-quarter come from the surrounding towns of Winchester, Cambridge Somerville, Watertown, Lexington, Belmont, and Medford. Thirty-five percent come from other towns in the Boston metro area. Nearly 10% come from outside of the Metro Area, with several respondents coming from New Hampshire. As will be discussed in Section 7, the Regent Theatre has a wider catchment area than the Capitol Theatre.

Chart A-2



Three-quarters of those surveyed reported that they had or were planning to visit local shops and restaurants on this trip. Ninety-eight percent plan to return to Arlington in the future to shop and eat. Forty-three percent of the patrons surveyed visited restaurants and 29% more said that they visited both shops and restaurants, indicating that more than 70% of patrons visit restaurants. One-third of the audience visited shops, including those that visited both shops and restaurants.

Chart A-3



Average spending by audience members surveyed was \$12 per capita and \$33 per party. Spending by those who have visited the theatre five or more times was significantly higher than the average, at \$19 per capita and \$46 per party, suggesting that, the more familiar theatre patrons are with Arlington, the more they spend at local businesses.

CHART A-4

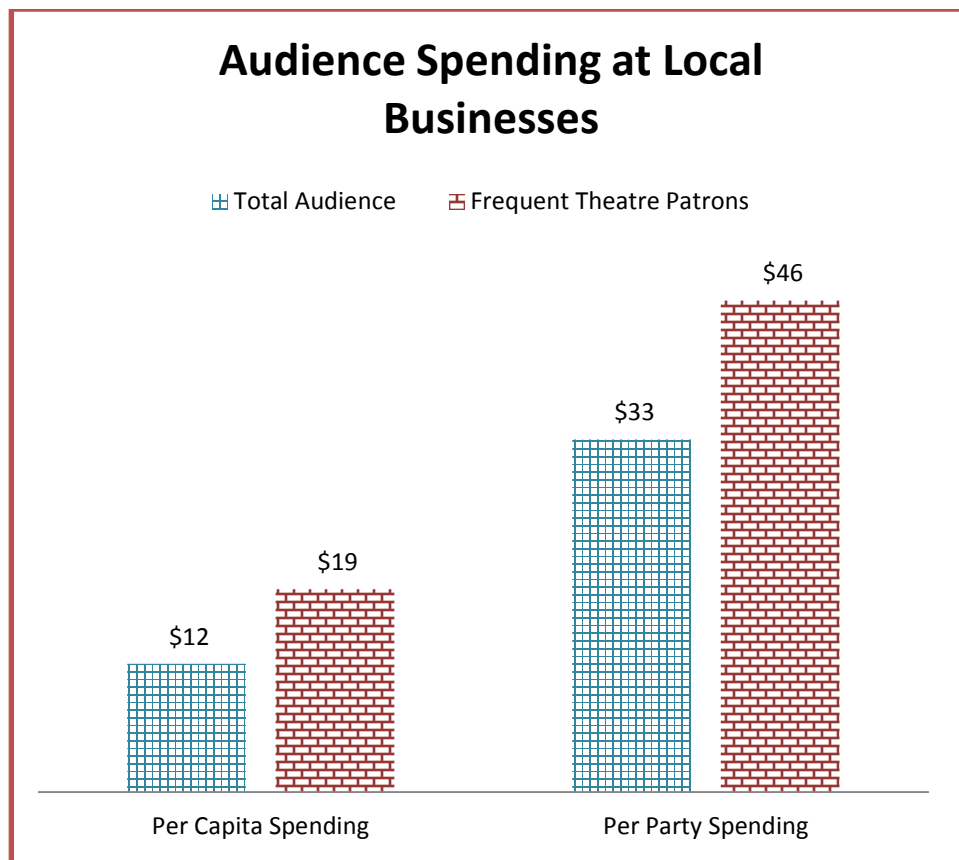
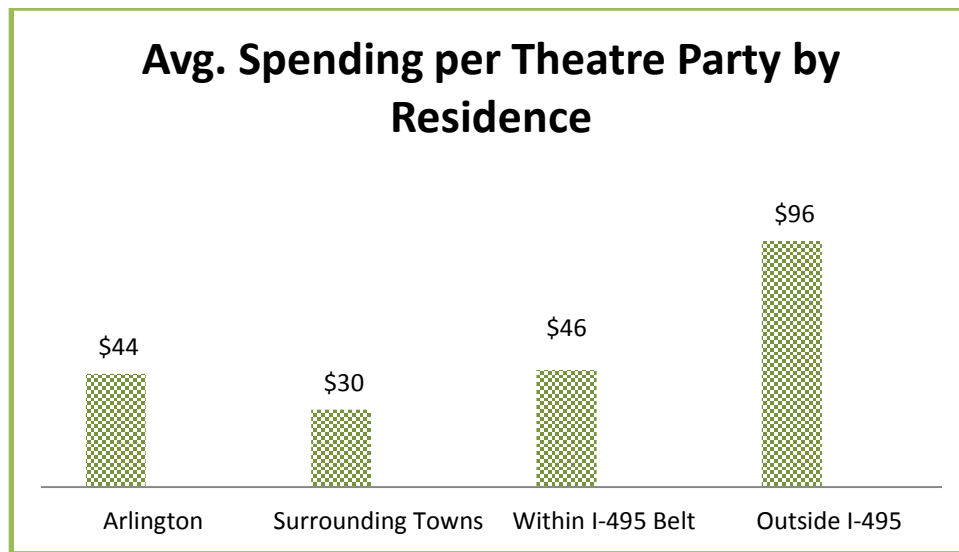


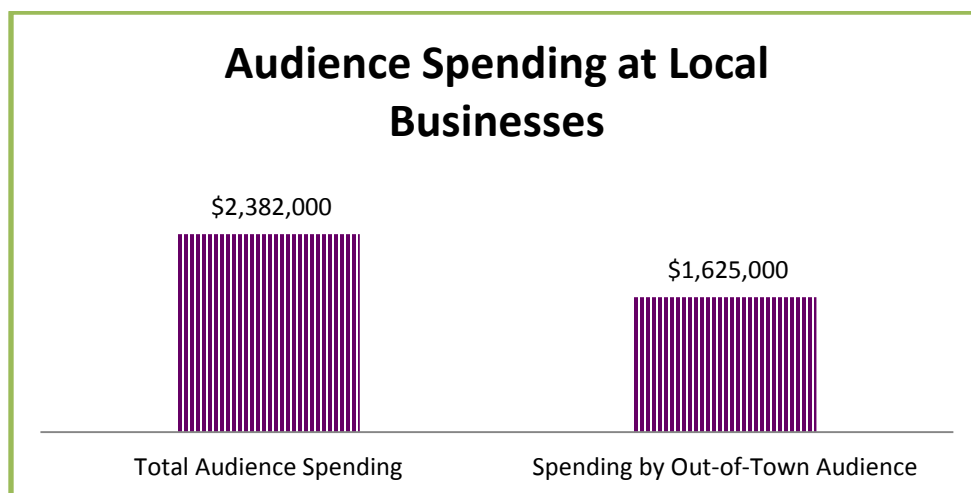
Chart A-5 shows that spending varies by the residence of the audience. Those living in surrounding towns spent the least, at \$30 per party. Theatre patrons from Arlington and from the Boston metro area (excluding bordering towns), spent more at \$46 per party. Those from outside of the Boston area spent the most at \$96 per party – more than twice as much as other groups.

Chart A-5



In order to estimate the total economic impact of Arlington's two theaters, we have multiplied average per capita spending (see Chart A-10) for each facility by average annual attendance – 130,000 in the case of the Capitol Theatre and 70,000 for the Regent Theatre. The total annual spending of theatre audiences has been estimated based on the average per capita spending and each theatre's annual attendance. Chart A-6 shows the results of this analysis. The total annual economic impact of local spending by theatre patrons in East Arlington and Arlington Center is estimated at nearly \$2.4 million a year. Spending by theatre patrons from outside Arlington is estimated at over \$1.6 million – about two-thirds of the total.

Chart A-6



7 Audience Survey Results by Theatre

In this final section of the report, the survey results are summarized by Theatre. Results are presented for the audiences at the Capitol and the Regent Theatres. Due to their contrasting business models, there are some interesting differences in the audiences that they attract.

Chart A-7

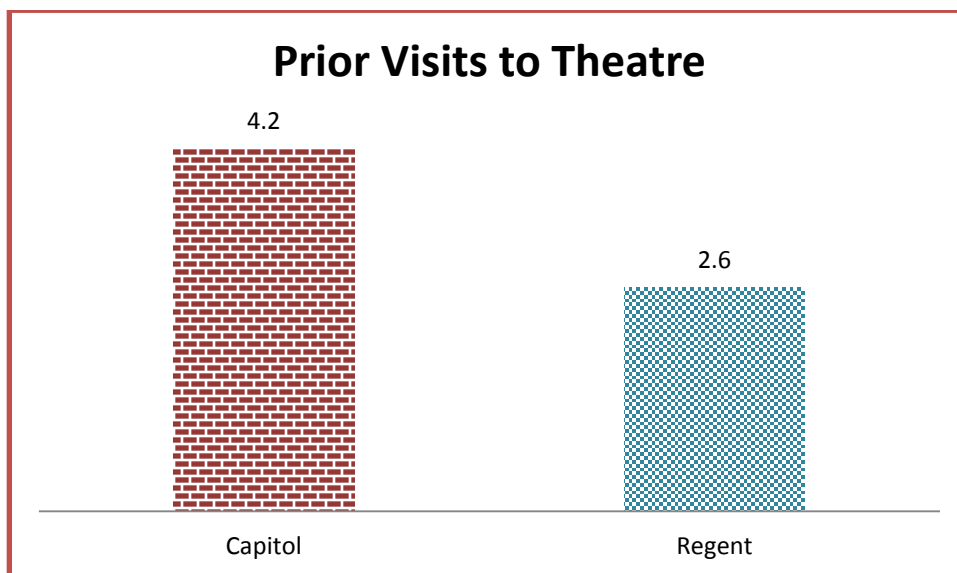


Chart A-7 shows that the Capitol has a greater proportion of repeat patrons, with the average patron having visited the Capitol over 4 times before, compared with an average of 2.6 prior visits to the Regent.

Charts A-8 and A-9 on the following page shows the towns from which the theatres draw their audiences. It is apparent that the Capitol Theatre, because it is a local-serving movie theatre, draws a much larger proportion from the vicinity. Because it's a mainstream entertainment venue, the Capitol draws over three-quarters of their audience from Arlington and the surrounding towns of Winchester, Cambridge, Somerville, Watertown, Lexington, Belmont, and Medford.

Because the Regent is a regional destination, providing entertainment for specific subcultures, it draws 45% of its audience from a much wider area covering the entire the Boston metro area (excluding Arlington and surrounding communities). Thirteen percent of the Regent's audience comes from

outside of the metro area and several patrons had come all the way from New Hampshire and Rhode Island to attend special film festivals, plays, and concerts.

Chart A-8

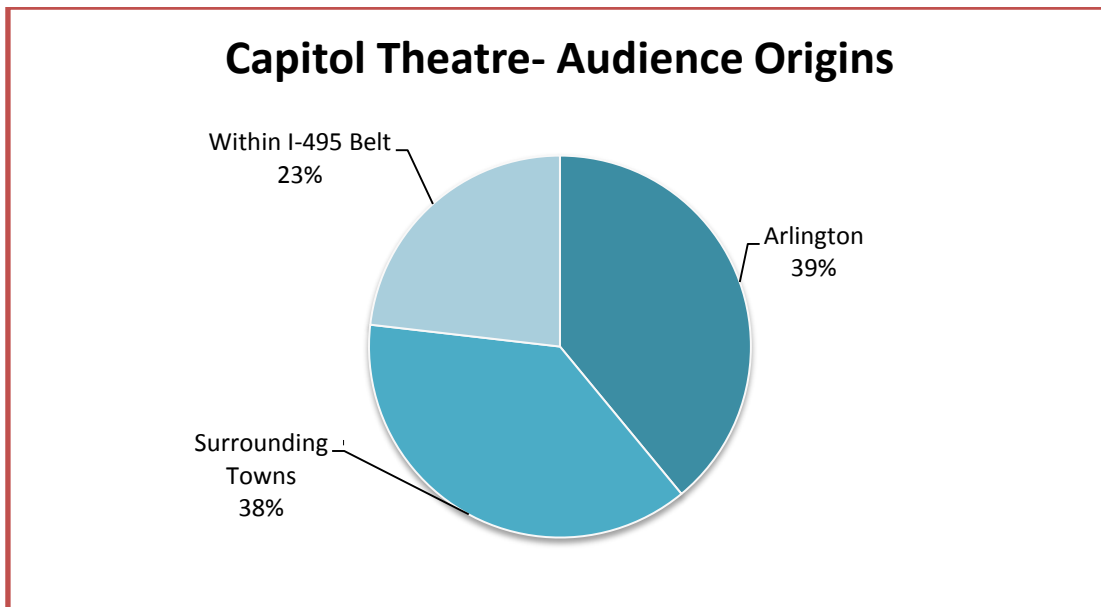
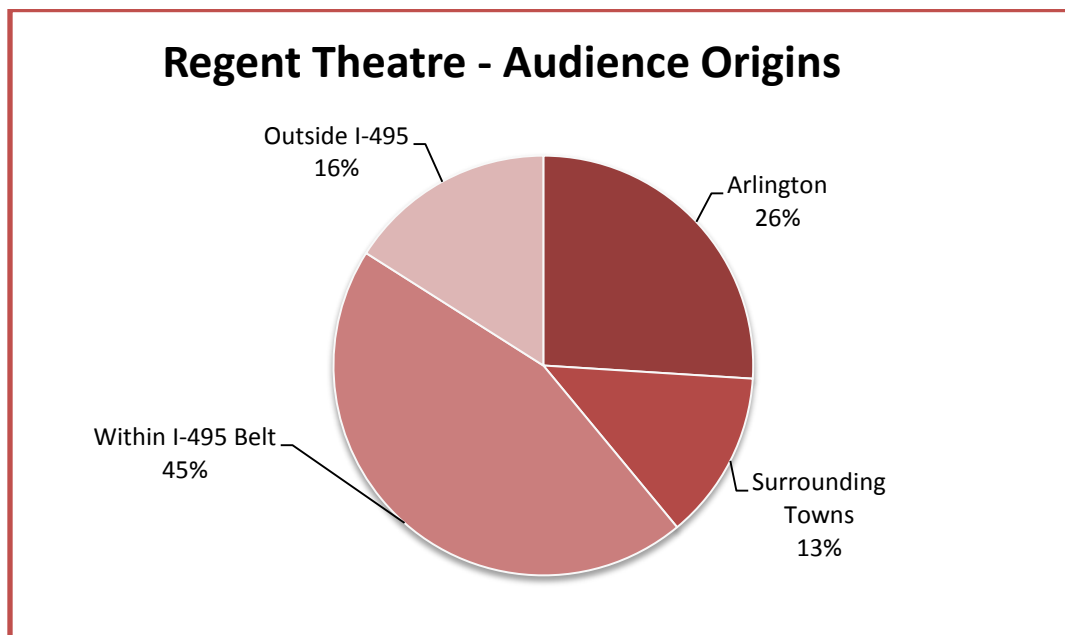
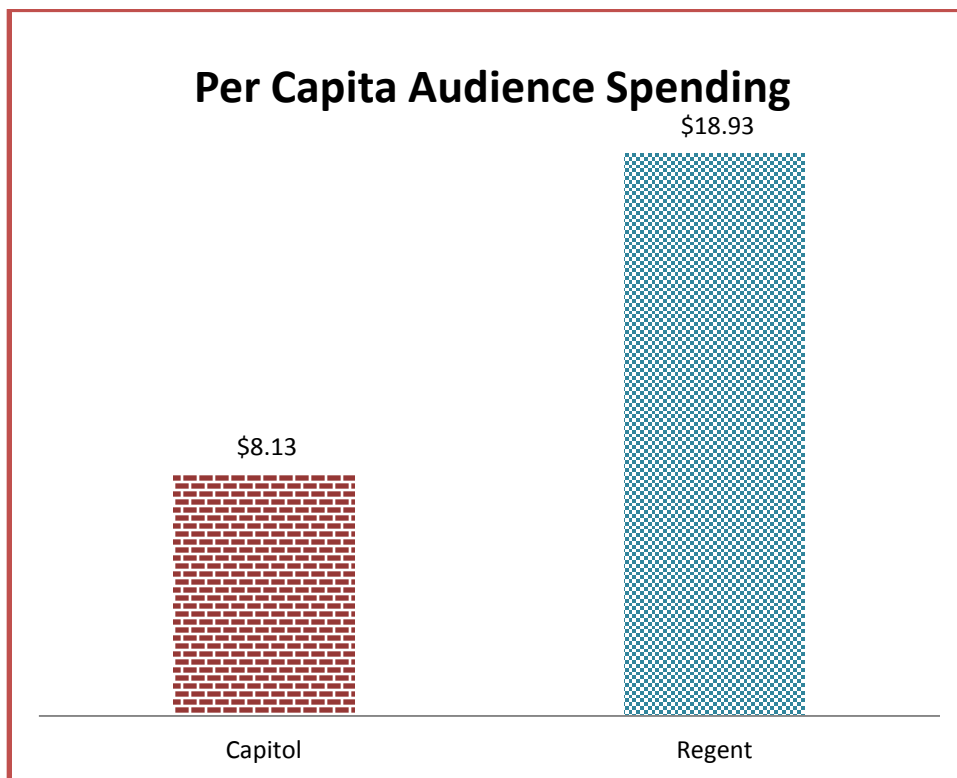


Chart A-9



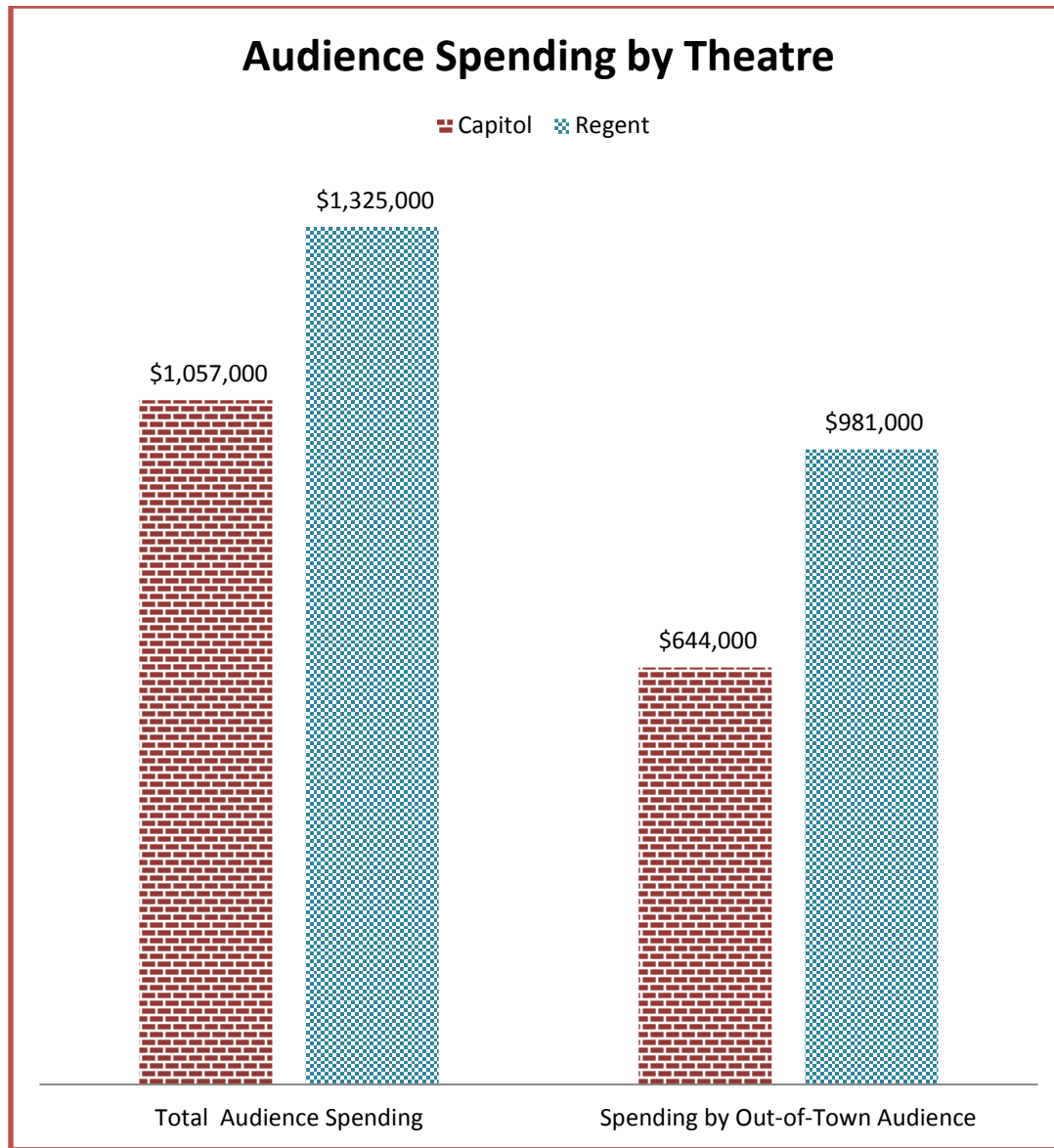
Although attendance at the Capitol Theatre is nearly twice that of the Regent, the Regent's audiences come from farther away and spend more money per party at local businesses than those of the Capitol Theatre. Attending a live performance or a film series is more of an event than going to a first or second run movie and audiences tend to spend more money.

Chart A-10



The business survey has found that the presence of the theatre was a major factor in the decisions of most of these establishments to locate here. People go to movies more often than to the theatre. As has been presented in Chart A-7, the average Capitol Theatre patron had paid more than 4 visits to the cinema in the past year. With its low ticket prices together with the good supply of reasonably priced restaurants in East Arlington, the Capitol provides families, young people, and the elderly with an affordable entertainment experience.

Chart A-11



In order to estimate the total economic impact of Arlington’s two theaters, we have multiplied average per capita spending for each facility by average annual attendance – 130,000 in the case of the Capitol Theatre and 70,000 for the Regent Theatre. The results are shown in Chart A-11. The economic impact of the Capitol Theatre is estimated at \$1.1 million, while that of the Regent is projected at \$1.3 million. The Capitol Theatre is estimated to bring in \$644,000 a year in out-of-town spending, while the Regent generates \$981,000 in non-local spending. The combined impacts of the two theatres on local businesses in Arlington are estimated at \$2.4 million a year.

8

Audience Comments on Arlington's Theatres

The Audience Survey Form provided space for unprompted comments. Over 100 audience members volunteered comments. These comments illustrate the importance of the Theatres to the economy and to the quality of life in Arlington. They provide valuable public perspectives on the historical significance, and the economic and cultural importance of the theatres.

Historical & Cultural Significance

Many of the audience comments related to the cultural and historical significance of the theatres, for both the communities and the residents and visitors personally. For example:

"Love the Capitol Theatre. I grew up in Cambridge and I'm grateful for the chance to still be coming to this theatre." Party of 2 from Melrose, Spent \$70 at local businesses.

"I'm a big fan of the Capitol Theatre. I love having a nice theatre in my hometown. I feel that Arlington is lucky to have a historic Theatre still running in the Community. I'm grateful that the owners invested the money to convert to digital". Arlington, Party of 3.

"I adore the Regent Theatre because it's NOT a suburban multiplex. I love its history, its importance to the community, and the vital link that it provides between past and present entertainment. A beloved gem that must be preserved before it turns into another CVS!" Jamaica Plain Resident spent \$25 in town.

"I always enjoy attending small theater productions at the Regent. It's very nostalgic and it's nice to have some of the past still in your life." Stoughton, Party of 2, spent \$50 at local businesses.

"I've been coming to this theatre for 50 years, all through my childhood, and will continue as I love theatre." Stoneham, Party of 3, Spent \$35 in town.

"I grew up in Arlington and come back often." Waltham, Party of 2, spent \$20.

Quality of Programming & Variety of Entertainment

Other audience members commented on the cultural contribution of the theatres to the area and the wide variety of entertainment that they offer, particularly the Regent Theatre, which serves non-mainstream sub-cultural niche audiences:

"There are so few community venues for great live entertainment. For Adults, Arlington's theatres are one of the town's greatest assets. For children/teens/young adults, they are venues to be treasured." Arlington, Party of 2, spent \$300.

"Arlington's theatres have a variety of shows. Something for everyone." Waltham, Party of 4, Spent \$300.

"Love the Regent! Just moved to Arlington in April and this is our 2nd time here. Love the programming, love the space!" Arlington party of 2, spent \$15.

"This is the best venue for live or movies presentations for miles. It is an Arlington Landmark." Arlington Resident, Spent \$25.

"This theatre shows great movies you wouldn't find elsewhere", Cambridge Resident.

"This theatre offers a multi-dimensional venue in an easily accessible location" Westwood, Party of 2, spent \$125.

"The Capitol Theatre & neighboring businesses are important for my well-being and entertainment/leisure time." Arlington Senior spent \$11 in East Arlington.

"Arlington's theatres are a vibrant part of the town's social and nightlife. We are fortunate to have these venues that offer such a variety of entertainment." Arlington, Party of 3, spent \$45 locally.

"It's imperative to keep this theatre in Arlington. I moved here because of what Arlington has to offer: restaurants, theatre, bookshops, and convenience. Theatre is our last cultural pin in this country. Arts are therapy." Arlington. Party of 2, Spent over \$100.

Affordability & Value for Money

Still other audience members commented on the affordable ticket prices at Arlington's theatres which make first-rate entertainment accessible to many more audience members:

"The Regent is sure cheaper than Boston theatres." Cambridge Resident.

"Shows are too expensive in Boston. So, the Regent makes theatre available to more people." Winthrop, Party of 2.

"Great theatre, good prices, seats, entertainment!!!" Belmont, Party of 2, Spent \$50.

"It sure is cheaper than in Boston. It is a big help to the surrounding communities." Lexington party of 6, spent \$150.

Impact on Local Businesses

A significant number of audience members surveyed commented on the positive impact of Arlington's theatres on the business districts that surround them. They said:

"Capitol Theatre is integral to Arlington and is the backbone of the Capitol Square Business District." Arlington, Party of Three, spent \$100 in restaurants & shops.

"The theatre is the lure for us to spend money in other local businesses." Capitol Theatre Patron from East Boston, Spent \$20 in town

"I work in film production and I consider this one of the best independent theatres in the region. I'm happy to support it and the restaurants. It's good for the local economy." Watertown, Party of 2, spent \$50 in town.

"Theatre is a great draw to this neighborhood!" Concord, Party of 2, \$35

"We frequently come to the Capitol Theatre and enjoy visiting the Shops." North Reading, Party of 2, Spent \$50.

"This is a lovely town. We ate in a very nice restaurant only because we came here for a show." Party of 3 from Marblehead, spent \$90 at local businesses, Spent \$50.

"Love Jimmy's!" Worcester, Party of 4, spent \$150 in town.

Impact on Arlington's Image & Trade Area

Many first-time Arlington visitors responded very positively to the experience of going to the theatre here and were clearly impressed with the dining and shopping options in East Arlington and Arlington Center. The theatres distinguish Arlington from surrounding towns, bringing in people from all over New England who emerge with a very favorable impression of the Town's identity and sense of community. As has been presented in Section 7, 98% of the audience planned to return to Arlington to patronize local businesses.

"My first time in Arlington. Great Community. I noticed some interesting shops and restaurants. I'll be back to visit." Cambridge Resident, spent \$15

"This is our first visit to Arlington, but now that we have seen what the town has to offer, next time we will make time to eat before or after the show.", Winthrop, Party of 2.

"Great attraction to bring people to Arlington. Charming town. Will return." First-time visitors from Hingham, spent \$120.

"I think theaters providing this type of entertainment are vital to any community. Although this is our first visit, we have enjoyed it and plan to return to the Regent", Salem, NH First time visitors, Spent \$50.

"I loved the show and the theatre. Another good show would bring me back to Arlington." Groton, Party of 2, spent \$60.

"Great Town." First-time visitors from Providence, RI, Party of 8, spent \$500 in town.

Fans of the Capitol Theatre

Capitol theatre patrons wrote many strong statements of support for the Theatre, including:

"You guys rock. Keep this theatre open forever." East Boston party of 2, spent \$100.

"The Cap is the Haps." Everett Resident.

"We love the Capitol Theatre!" Arlington Party of 2, Spent \$60.

"Love Capitol Theatre and Ice Cream shop." Somerville Resident, Spent \$20.

"Love the Capitol Theatre. It's the main reason I come to Arlington." Belmont Resident, spent \$20 locally.

"I LOVE THE CAPITOL." Arlington Resident, spent \$30 locally.

"We love this theatre!!!" Cambridge resident.

"Love this theatre – for a date or a family outing –it's perfect." Arlington, Party of 3. Spent \$50 in town.

"This community theatre is a gem. Worth investing in." Jamaica Plain, Party of 2, spent \$100 locally.

"What a lovely theatre, complete with hometown charm and contemporary pizazz!" Dorchester, Party of 3, spent \$75 in East Arlington.

"The Capitol is a fabulous place to see a movie. I come often." Somerville party of 2, spent \$50

"I love to visit this theatre and Artbeat next door." Watertown party of 2, spent \$50

"We love your theatre." Arlington party of three, spent \$30.

"This is the best theatre I've ever been to." Winchester party of 4, spent \$100

Fans of the Regent Theatre

The Regent Theatre has many avid fans. Their comments included:

"We love Arlington and the Regent Theatre." Arlington, Party of 3. Spent \$22

"We love having a theatre like this in town. I'm a new resident and I plan to come back. Keep the arts going!" Arlington Resident, spent \$15.

"This is the best venue for live entertainment and movies for miles. It's an Arlington Landmark." Arlington Resident, Spent \$25.

"Great Theatre. I love to come here. Arlington is a nice town and fun to visit." Natick, Party of 3, spent \$30.

"Very important to Arlington. A great venue to meet friends." Acton, Party of 3, spent \$40.

"It's a gift to have such a lovely theatre so close to home." Malden, Party of 3.

"The Regent Theatre is very important to Arlington." Cape Cod, Party of 2, Spent \$50.

Just a Few Complaints

There were very few unfavorable comments from theatre audiences. The ones that were recorded related to parking and the shortage of places that are open late:

"Wish there was more night life in Arlington. We spend hundreds each year at Christopher's in Cambridge. This theatre is great. It's the main reason I come to Arlington." Belmont, Party of 4.

"Extra Parking would be nice." Capitol Theatre Patron from Medford.

"Parking is 2 hours – Movies are more than 2 hours." Arlington Resident.

"Nice Town. Two hour public parking? Not enough to see a show and shop." Salem, MA, first time visitors.

"Two hour public parking is not enough." Peabody Residents.